

RANDOM INTERNATIONAL POETRY OF THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES.

Compiled by Matt Pierard CC 2016

HEAVEN

Fish (fly-replete, in depth of June,
Dawdling away their wat'ry noon)
Ponder deep wisdom, dark or clear,
Each secret fishy hope or fear.
Fish say, they have their Stream and Pond;
But is there anything Beyond?
This life cannot be All, they swear,
For how unpleasant, if it were!
One may not doubt that, somehow, Good
Shall come of Water and of Mud;
And, sure, the reverent eye must see
A Purpose in Liquidity.
We darkly know, by Faith we cry,
The future is not Wholly Dry.
Mud unto mud!--Death eddies near--
Not here the appointed End, not here!
But somewhere, beyond Space and Time,
Is wetter water, slimier slime!
And there (they trust) there swimmeth One
Who swam ere rivers were begun,
Immense, of fishy form and mind,
Squamous, omnipotent, and kind;
And under that Almighty Fin,
The littlest fish may enter in.
Oh! never fly conceals a hook,
Fish say, in the Eternal Brook,
But more than mundane weeds are there,
And mud, celestially fair;
Fat caterpillars drift around,
And Paradisal grubs are found;
Unfading moths, immortal flies,
And the worm that never dies.
And in that Heaven of all their wish,
There shall be no more land, say fish.

From: The Project Gutenberg EBook of 1914 and Other Poems, by Rupert Brooke

THE EPISODE OF NISUS AND EURYALUS. [1]

A PARAPHRASE FROM THE "ÆNEID," LIB. 9.

Nisus, the guardian of the portal, stood,
Eager to gild his arms with hostile blood;
Well skill'd, in fight, the quivering lance to wield,
Or pour his arrows thro' th' embattled field:
From Ida torn, he left his sylvan cave, [i]
And sought a foreign home, a distant grave.
To watch the movements of the Daunian host,
With him Euryalus sustains the post;
No lovelier mien adorn'd the ranks of Troy,
And beardless bloom yet grac'd the gallant boy; 10
Though few the seasons of his youthful life,
As yet a novice in the martial strife,
'Twas his, with beauty, Valour's gifts to share--
A soul heroic, as his form was fair:
These burn with one pure flame of generous love;
In peace, in war, united still they move;
Friendship and Glory form their joint reward;
And, now, combin'd they hold their nightly guard. [ii]

"What God," exclaim'd the first, "instils this fire?
Or, in itself a God, what great desire? 20
My lab'ring soul, with anxious thought oppress'd,
Abhors this station of inglorious rest;
The love of fame with this can ill accord,
Be't mine to seek for glory with my sword.
See'st thou yon camp, with torches twinkling dim,
Where drunken slumbers wrap each lazy limb?
Where confidence and ease the watch disdain,
And drowsy Silence holds her sable reign?
Then hear my thought:--In deep and sullen grief
Our troops and leaders mourn their absent chief: 30
Now could the gifts and promised prize be thine,
(The deed, the danger, and the fame be mine,)
Were this decreed, beneath yon rising mound,
Methinks, an easy path, perchance, were found;
Which past, I speed my way to Pallas' walls,
And lead Æneas from Evander's halls."

With equal ardour fir'd, and warlike joy,
His glowing friend address'd the Dardan boy:--
"These deeds, my Nisus, shalt thou dare alone?
Must all the fame, the peril, be thine own? 40
Am I by thee despis'd, and left afar,
As one unfit to share the toils of war?
Not thus his son the great Opheltes taught:
Not thus my sire in Argive combats fought;
Not thus, when Ilion fell by heavenly hate,

I track'd Æneas through the walks of fate:
 Thou know'st my deeds, my breast devoid of fear,
 And hostile life-drops dim my gory spear.
 Here is a soul with hope immortal burns,
 And _life_, ignoble _life_, for _Glory_ spurns. [iii] 50
 Fame, fame is cheaply earn'd by fleeting breath:
 The price of honour, is the sleep of death."

Then Nisus:--"Calm thy bosom's fond alarms: [iv]
 Thy heart beats fiercely to the din of arms.
 More dear thy worth, and valour than my own,
 I swear by him, who fills Olympus' throne!
 So may I triumph, as I speak the truth,
 And clasp again the comrade of my youth!
 But should I fall,--and he, who dares advance
 Through hostile legions, must abide by chance,-- 60
 If some Rutulian arm, with adverse blow,
 Should lay the friend, who ever lov'd thee, low,
 Live thou--such beauties I would fain preserve--
 Thy budding years a lengthen'd term deserve;
 When humbled in the dust, let some one be,
 Whose gentle eyes will shed one tear for me;
 Whose manly arm may snatch me back by force,
 Or wealth redeem, from foes, my captive corse;
 Or, if my destiny these last deny,
 If, in the spoiler's power, my ashes lie; 70
 Thy pious care may raise a simple tomb,
 To mark thy love, and signalise my doom.
 Why should thy doating wretched mother weep
 Her only boy, reclin'd in endless sleep?
 Who, for thy sake, the tempest's fury dar'd,
 Who, for thy sake, war's deadly peril shar'd;
 Who brav'd what woman never brav'd before,
 And left her native, for the Latian shore."

"In vain you damp the ardour of my soul,"
 Replied Euryalus; "it scorns controul; 80
 Hence, let us haste!"--their brother guards arose,
 Rous'd by their call, nor court again repose;
 The pair, buoy'd up on Hope's exulting wing,
 Their stations leave, and speed to seek the king.

Now, o'er the earth a solemn stillness ran,
 And lull'd alike the cares of brute and man;
 Save where the Dardan leaders, nightly, hold
 Alternate converse, and their plans unfold.
 On one great point the council are agreed,
 An instant message to their prince decreed; 90
 Each lean'd upon the lance he well could wield,
 And pois'd with easy arm his ancient shield;
 When Nisus and his friend their leave request,
 To offer something to their high behest.

With anxious tremors, yet unaw'd by fear, [v]
The faithful pair before the throne appear;
Iulus greets them; at his kind command,
The elder, first, address'd the hoary band.

"With patience" (thus Hyrtacides began)
"Attend, nor judge, from youth, our humble plan. 100
Where yonder beacons half-expiring beam,
Our slumbering foes of future conquest dream, [vi]
Nor heed that we a secret path have trac'd,
Between the ocean and the portal plac'd;
Beneath the covert of the blackening smoke,
Whose shade, securely, our design will cloak!
If you, ye Chiefs, and Fortune will allow,
We'll bend our course to yonder mountain's brow,
Where Pallas' walls, at distance, meet the sight,
Seen o'er the glade, when not obscur'd by night: 110
Then shall Æneas in his pride return,
While hostile matrons raise their offspring's urn;
And Latian spoils, and purpled heaps of dead
Shall mark the havoc of our Hero's tread;
Such is our purpose, not unknown the way,
Where yonder torrent's devious waters stray;
Oft have we seen, when hunting by the stream,
The distant spires above the valleys gleam."

Mature in years, for sober wisdom fam'd,
Mov'd by the speech, Alethes here exclaim'd,-- 120
"Ye parent gods! who rule the fate of Troy,
Still dwells the Dardan spirit in the boy;
When minds, like these, in striplings thus ye raise,
Yours is the godlike act, be yours the praise;
In gallant youth, my fainting hopes revive,
And Ilion's wonted glories still survive."
Then in his warm embrace the boys he press'd,
And, quivering, strain'd them to his agéd breast;
With tears the burning cheek of each bedew'd,
And, sobbing, thus his first discourse renew'd:-- 130
"What gift, my countrymen, what martial prize,
Can we bestow, which you may not despise?
Our Deities the first best boon have given--
Internal virtues are the gift of Heaven.
What poor rewards can bless your deeds on earth,
Doubtless await such young, exalted worth;
Æneas and Ascanius shall combine
To yield applause far, far surpassing mine."

Iulus then:--"By all the powers above!
By those Penates, who my country love! 140
By hoary Vesta's sacred Fane, I swear,
My hopes are all in you, ye generous pair!
Restore my father, to my grateful sight,

And all my sorrows, yield to one delight.
 Nisus! two silver goblets are thine own,
 Sav'd from Arisba's stately domes o'erthrown;
 My sire secured them on that fatal day,
 Nor left such bowls an Argive robber's prey.
 Two massy tripods, also, shall be thine,
 Two talents polish'd from the glittering mine; 150
 An ancient cup, which Tyrian Dido gave,
 While yet our vessels press'd the Punic wave:
 But when the hostile chiefs at length bow down,
 When great Æneas wears Hesperia's crown,
 The casque, the buckler, and the fiery steed
 Which Turnus guides with more than mortal speed,
 Are thine; no envious lot shall then be cast,
 I pledge my word, irrevocably past:
 Nay more, twelve slaves, and twice six captive dames,
 To soothe thy softer hours with amorous flames, 160
 And all the realms, which now the Latins sway,
 The labours of to-night shall well repay.
 But thou, my generous youth, whose tender years
 Are near my own, whose worth my heart reveres,
 Henceforth, affection, sweetly thus begun,
 Shall join our bosoms and our souls in one;
 Without thy aid, no glory shall be mine,
 Without thy dear advice, no great design;
 Alike, through life, esteem'd, thou godlike boy,
 In war my bulwark, and in peace my joy." 170

To him Euryalus:--"No day shall shame
 The rising glories which from this I claim.
 Fortune may favour, or the skies may frown,
 But valour, spite of fate, obtains renown.
 Yet, ere from hence our eager steps depart,
 One boon I beg, the nearest to my heart:
 My mother, sprung from Priam's royal line,
 Like thine ennobled, hardly less divine,
 Nor Troy nor king Acestes' realms restrain
 Her feeble age from dangers of the main; 180
 Alone she came, all selfish fears above, [vii]
 A bright example of maternal love.
 Unknown, the secret enterprise I brave,
 Lest grief should bend my parent to the grave;
 From this alone no fond adieus I seek,
 No fainting mother's lips have press'd my cheek;
 By gloomy Night and thy right hand I vow,
 Her parting tears would shake my purpose now: [viii]
 Do thou, my prince, her failing age sustain,
 In thee her much-lov'd child may live again; 190
 Her dying hours with pious conduct bless,
 Assist her wants, relieve her fond distress:
 So dear a hope must all my soul enflame, [ix]
 To rise in glory, or to fall in fame."

Struck with a filial care so deeply felt,
 In tears at once the Trojan warriors melt;
 Faster than all, Iulus' eyes o'erflow!
 Such love was his, and such had been his woe.
 "All thou hast ask'd, receive," the Prince replied;
 "Nor this alone, but many a gift beside. 200
 To cheer thy mother's years shall be my aim,
 Creusa's [2] style but wanting to the dame;
 Fortune an adverse wayward course may run,
 But bless'd thy mother in so dear a son.
 Now, by my life!--my Sire's most sacred oath--
 To thee I pledge my full, my firmest troth,
 All the rewards which once to thee were vow'd, [x]
 If thou should'st fall, on her shall be bestow'd."
 Thus spoke the weeping Prince, then forth to view
 A gleaming falchion from the sheath he drew; 210
 Lycaon's utmost skill had grac'd the steel,
 For friends to envy and for foes to feel:
 A tawny hide, the Moorish lion's spoil, [xi]
 Slain 'midst the forest in the hunter's toil,
 Mnestheus to guard the elder youth bestows, [xii]
 And old Alethes' casque defends his brows;
 Arm'd, thence they go, while all th' assembl'd train,
 To aid their cause, implore the gods in vain. [xiii]
 More than a boy, in wisdom and in grace,
 Iulus holds amidst the chiefs his place: 220
 His prayer he sends; but what can prayers avail,
 Lost in the murmurs of the sighing gale? [xiv]

The trench is pass'd, and favour'd by the night,
 Through sleeping foes, they wheel their wary flight.
 When shall the sleep of many a foe be o'er?
 Alas! some slumber, who shall wake no more!
 Chariots and bridles, mix'd with arms, are seen,
 And flowing flasks, and scatter'd troops between:
 Bacchus and Mars, to rule the camp, combine;
 A mingled Chaos this of war and wine. 230
 "Now," cries the first, "for deeds of blood prepare,
 With me the conquest and the labour share:
 Here lies our path; lest any hand arise,
 Watch thou, while many a dreaming chieftain dies;
 I'll carve our passage, through the heedless foe,
 And clear thy road, with many a deadly blow."
 His whispering accents then the youth repress'd,
 And pierced proud Rhamnes through his panting breast:
 Stretch'd at his ease, th' incautious king repos'd;
 Debauch, and not fatigue, his eyes had clos'd; 240
 To Turnus dear, a prophet and a prince,
 His omens more than augur's skill evince;
 But he, who thus foretold the fate of all,
 Could not avert his own untimely fall.
 Next Remus' armour-bearer, hapless, fell,

And three unhappy slaves the carnage swell;
 The charioteer along his courser's sides
 Expires, the steel his sever'd neck divides;
 And, last, his Lord is number'd with the dead:
 Bounding convulsive, flies the gasping head; 250
 From the swoll'n veins the blackening torrents pour;
 Stain'd is the couch and earth with clotting gore.
 Young Lamyrus and Lamus next expire,
 And gay Serranus, fill'd with youthful fire;
 Half the long night in childish games was pass'd; [xv]
 Lull'd by the potent grape, he slept at last:
 Ah! happier far, had he the morn survey'd,
 And, till Aurora's dawn, his skill display'd. [xvi]
 In slaughter'd folds, the keepers lost in sleep, [xvii]
 His hungry fangs a lion thus may steep; 260
 'Mid the sad flock, at dead of night he prowls,
 With murder glutted, and in carnage rolls
 Insatiate still, through teeming herds he roams; [xviii]
 In seas of gore, the lordly tyrant foams.

Nor less the other's deadly vengeance came,
 But falls on feeble crowds without a name;
 His wound unconscious Fadus scarce can feel,
 Yet wakeful Rhæsus sees the threatening steel;
 His coward breast behind a jar he hides,
 And, vainly, in the weak defence confides; 270
 Full in his heart, the falchion search'd his veins,
 The reeking weapon bears alternate stains;
 Through wine and blood, commingling as they flow,
 One feeble spirit seeks the shades below.
 Now where Messapus dwelt they bend their way,
 Whose fires emit a faint and trembling ray;
 There, unconfin'd, behold each grazing steed,
 Unwatch'd, unheeded, on the herbage feed: [xix]
 Brave Nisus here arrests his comrade's arm,
 Too flush'd with carnage, and with conquest warm: 280
 "Hence let us haste, the dangerous path is pass'd;
 Full foes enough, to-night, have breath'd their last:
 Soon will the Day those Eastern clouds adorn;
 Now let us speed, nor tempt the rising morn."

What silver arms, with various art emboss'd,
 What bowls and mantles, in confusion toss'd,
 They leave regardless! yet one glittering prize
 Attracts the younger Hero's wandering eyes;
 The gilded harness Rhamnes' coursers felt,
 The gems which stud the monarch's golden belt: 290
 This from the pallid corse was quickly torn,
 Once by a line of former chieftains worn.
 Th' exulting boy the studded girdle wears,
 Messapus' helm his head, in triumph, bears;
 Then from the tents their cautious steps they bend,

To seek the vale, where safer paths extend.

Just at this hour, a band of Latian horse
To Turnus' camp pursue their destin'd course:
While the slow foot their tardy march delay,
The knights, impatient, spur along the way: 300
Three hundred mail-clad men, by Volscens led,
To Turnus with their master's promise sped:
Now they approach the trench, and view the walls,
When, on the left, a light reflection falls;
The plunder'd helmet, through the waning night,
Sheds forth a silver radiance, glancing bright;
Volscens, with question loud, the pair alarms:--
"Stand, Stragglers! stand! why early thus in arms?
From whence? to whom?"--He meets with no reply;
Trusting the covert of the night, they fly: 310
The thicket's depth, with hurried pace, they tread,
While round the wood the hostile squadron spread.

With brakes entangled, scarce a path between,
Dreary and dark appears the sylvan scene:
Euryalus his heavy spoils impede,
The boughs and winding turns his steps mislead;
But Nisus scours along the forest's maze,
To where Latinus' steeds in safety graze,
Then backward o'er the plain his eyes extend,
On every side they seek his absent friend. 320
"O God! my boy," he cries, "of me bereft, [xx]
In what impending perils art thou left!"
Listening he runs--above the waving trees,
Tumultuous voices swell the passing breeze;
The war-cry rises, thundering hoofs around
Wake the dark echoes of the trembling ground.
Again he turns--of footsteps hears the noise--
The sound elates--the sight his hope destroys:
The hapless boy a ruffian train surround, [xxi]
While lengthening shades his weary way confound; 330
Him, with loud shouts, the furious knights pursue,
Struggling in vain, a captive to the crew. [xxii]
What can his friend 'gainst thronging numbers dare?
Ah! must he rush, his comrade's fate to share?
What force, what aid, what stratagem essay,
Back to redeem the Latian spoiler's prey?
His life a votive ransom nobly give,
Or die with him, for whom he wish'd to live?
Poising with strength his lifted lance on high,
On Luna's orb he cast his frenzied eye:-- 340

"Goddess serene, transcending every star! [xxiii]
Queen of the sky, whose beams are seen afar!
By night Heaven owns thy sway, by day the grove,
When, as chaste Dian, here thou deign'st to rove;

If e'er myself, or Sire, have sought to grace
 Thine altars, with the produce of the chase,
 Speed, speed my dart to pierce yon vaunting crowd,
 To free my friend, and scatter far the proud."
 Thus having said, the hissing dart he flung;
 Through parted shades the hurtling weapon sung; 350
 The thirsty point in Sulmo's entrails lay,
 Transfix'd his heart, and stretch'd him on the clay:
 He sobs, he dies,--the troop in wild amaze,
 Unconscious whence the death, with horror gaze;
 While pale they stare, thro' Tagus' temples riven,
 A second shaft, with equal force is driven:
 Fierce Volscens rolls around his lowering eyes;
 Veil'd by the night, secure the Trojan lies. [xxiv]
 Burning with wrath, he view'd his soldiers fall.
 "Thou youth accurst, thy life shall pay for all!" 360
 Quick from the sheath his flaming glaive he drew,
 And, raging, on the boy defenceless flew.
 Nisus, no more the blackening shade conceals,
 Forth, forth he starts, and all his love reveals;
 Aghast, confus'd, his fears to madness rise,
 And pour these accents, shrieking as he flies;
 "Me, me,--your vengeance hurl on me alone;
 Here sheathe the steel, my blood is all your own;
 Ye starry Spheres! thou conscious Heaven! attest!
 He could not--durst not--lo! the guile confest! 370
 All, all was mine,--his early fate suspend;
 He only lov'd, too well, his hapless friend:
 Spare, spare, ye Chiefs! from him your rage remove;
 His fault was friendship, all his crime was love."
 He pray'd in vain; the dark assassin's sword
 Pierced the fair side, the snowy bosom gor'd;
 Lowly to earth inclines his plume-clad crest,
 And sanguine torrents mantle o'er his breast:
 As some young rose whose blossom scents the air,
 Languid in death, expires beneath the share; 380
 Or crimson poppy, sinking with the shower,
 Declining gently, falls a fading flower;
 Thus, sweetly drooping, bends his lovely head,
 And lingering Beauty hovers round the dead.

But fiery Nisus stems the battle's tide,
 Revenge his leader, and Despair his guide; [xxv]
 Volscens he seeks amidst the gathering host,
 Volscens must soon appease his comrade's ghost;
 Steel, flashing, pours on steel, foe crowds on foe;
 Rage nerves his arm, Fate gleams in every blow; 390
 In vain beneath unnumber'd wounds he bleeds,
 Nor wounds, nor death, distracted Nisus heeds;
 In viewless circles wheel'd his falchion flies,
 Nor quits the hero's grasp till Volscens dies;
 Deep in his throat its end the weapon found,

The tyrant's soul fled groaning through the wound. [xxvi]
Thus Nisus all his fond affection prov'd--
Dying, revenged the fate of him he lov'd;
Then on his bosom sought his wonted place, [xxvii]
And death was heavenly, in his friend's embrace! 400

Celestial pair! if aught my verse can claim,
Wafted on Time's broad pinion, yours is fame! [xxviii]
Ages on ages shall your fate admire,
No future day shall see your names expire,
While stands the Capitol, immortal dome!
And vanquished millions hail their Empress, Rome!

[Footnote 1: Lines 1-18 were first published in 'P. on V. Occasions',
under the title of "Fragment of a Translation from the 9th Book of
Virgil's 'Æneid'."]

[Footnote 2: The mother of Iulus, lost on the night when Troy was
taken.]

From: The Project Gutenberg EBook of Byron's Poetical Works, Vol. 1, by Lord Byron

CANZON: THE SPEAR

I

'Tis the clear light of love I praise
That steadfast gloweth o'er deep waters,
A clarity that gleams always.
Though man's soul pass through troubled waters,
Strange ways to him are opened.
To shore the beaten ship is sped
If only love of light give aid.

II

That fair far spear of light now lays
Its long gold shaft upon the waters.
Ah! might I pass upon its rays
To where it gleams beyond the waters,
Or might my troubled heart be fed
Upon the frail clear light there shed,
Then were my pain at last allay'd.

III

Although the clouded storm dismays
Many a heart upon these waters,
The thought of that far golden blaze
Giveth me heart upon the waters,
Thinking thereof my bark is led
To port wherein no storm I dread;
No tempest maketh me afraid.

IV

Yet when within my heart I gaze
Upon my fair beyond the waters,
Meseems my soul within me prays
To pass straightway beyond the waters.
Though I be alway banished
From ways and woods that she doth tread,
One thing there is that doth not fade,

V

Deep in my heart that spear-print stays,
That wound I gat beyond the waters,
Deeper with passage of the days
That pass as swift and bitter waters,
While a dull fire within my head
Moveth itself if word be said
Which hath concern with that far maid.

VI

My love is lovelier than the sprays
Of eglantine above clear waters,
Or whitest lilies that upraise
Their heads in midst of moated waters.
No poppy in the May-glad mead
Would match her quivering lips' red
If 'gainst her lips it should be laid.

VII

The light within her eyes, which slays
Base thoughts and stilleth troubled waters,
Is like the gold where sunlight plays
Upon the still o'ershadowed waters.
When anger is there mingled
There comes a keener gleam instead,
Like flame that burns beneath thin jade.

VIII

Know by the words here mingled
What love hath made my heart his stead,
Glowing like flame beneath thin jade.

EFFECTS OF MUSIC UPON A COMPANY OF PEOPLE

I

DEUX MOVEMENTS

1. Temple qui fut.
2. Poissons d'or.

1

A soul curls back,
Their souls like petals,
Thin, long, spiral,
Like those of a chrysanthemum curl
Smoke-like up and back from the
Vavicel, the calyx,
Pale green, pale gold, transparent,
Green of plasma, rose-white,
Spirate like smoke,
Curled,
Vibrating,
Slowly, waving slowly.
O Flower animate!
O calyx!
O crowd of foolish people!

2

The petals!
On the tip of each the figure
Delicate.
See, they dance, step to step.
Flora to festival,
Twine, bend, bow,
Frolic involve ye.
Woven the step,
Woven the tread, the moving.
Ribands they move,
Wave, bow to the centre.
Pause, rise, deepen in colour,
And fold in drowsily.

II

FROM A THING BY SCHUMANN

Breast high, floating and welling

Their soul, moving beneath the satin,
Plied the gold threads,
Pushed at the gauze above it.
The notes beat upon this,
Beat and indented it;
Rain dropped and came and fell upon this,
Hail and snow,
My sight gone in the flurry!

And then across the white silken,
Bellied up, as a sail bellies to the wind,
Over the fluid tenuous, diaphanous,
Over this curled a wave, greenish,
Mounted and overwhelmed it.
This membrane floating above,
And bellied out by the up-pressing soul.

Then came a mer-host,
And after them legion of Romans,
The usual, dull, theatrical!

From: Project Gutenberg's Canzoni & Ripostes, by Ezra Pound and T.E. Hulme

CHORICOS

The ancient songs
Pass deathward mournfully.

Cold lips that sing no more, and withered wreaths,
Regretful eyes, and drooping breasts and wings—
Symbols of ancient songs
Mournfully passing
Down to the great white surges,
Watched of none
Save the frail sea-birds
And the lithe pale girls,
Daughters of Okeanus.

And the songs pass
From the green land
Which lies upon the waves as a leaf
On the flowers of hyacinth;
And they pass from the waters,
The manifold winds and the dim moon,
And they come,
Silently winging through soft Kimmerian dusk,
To the quiet level lands
That she keeps for us all,
That she wrought for us all for sleep
In the silver days of the earth's dawning—
Proserpina, daughter of Zeus.

And we turn from the Kuprian's breasts,
And we turn from thee,
Phoibos Apollon,
And we turn from the music of old
And the hills that we loved and the meads,
And we turn from the fiery day,
And the lips that were over sweet;
For silently
Brushing the fields with red-shod feet,
With purple robe
Searing the flowers as with a sudden flame,
Death,
Thou hast come upon us.

And of all the ancient songs
Passing to the swallow-blue halls
By the dark streams of Persephone,
This only remains:
That we turn to thee,
Death,
That we turn to thee, singing
One last song.

O Death,
Thou art an healing wind
That blowest over white flowers
A-tremble with dew;
Thou art a wind flowing
Over dark leagues of lonely sea;
Thou art the dusk and the fragrance;
Thou art the lips of love mournfully smiling;
Thou art the pale peace of one
Sated with old desires;
Thou art the silence of beauty,
And we look no more for the morning
We yearn no more for the sun,
Since with thy white hands,
Death,
Thou crownest us with the pallid chaplets,
The slim colourless poppies
Which in thy garden alone
Softly thou gatherest.

And silently,
And with slow feet approaching,
And with bowed head and unlit eyes,
We kneel before thee:
And thou, leaning towards us,
Caressingly layest upon us
Flowers from thy thin cold hands,
And, smiling as a chaste woman
Knowing love in her heart,
Thou sealest our eyes
And the illimitable quietude
Comes gently upon us.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

HERMONAX

Gods of the sea;
Ino,
Leaving warm meads
For the green, grey-green fastnesses
Of the great deeps;

And Palemon,
Bright striker of sea-shaft,
Hear me.

Let all whom the sea loveth,
Come to its altar front,
And I
Who can offer no other sacrifice to thee
Bring this.

Broken by great waves,
The wavelets flung it here,
This sea-gliding creature,
This strange creature like a weed,
Covered with salt foam,
Torn from the hillocks
Of rock.

I, Hermonax,
Caster of nets,
Risking chance,
Plying the sea craft,
Came on it.

Thus to sea god
Cometh gift of sea wrack;
I, Hermonax, offer it
To thee, Ino,
And to Palemon.

H. D.

I

London, my beautiful,
it is not the sunset
nor the pale green sky
shimmering through the curtain
of the silver birch,
nor the quietness;
it is not the hopping
of birds
upon the lawn,
nor the darkness

stealing over all things
that moves me.

But as the moon creeps slowly
over the tree-tops
among the stars,
I think of her
and the glow her passing
sheds on men.

London, my beautiful,
I will climb
into the branches
to the moonlit tree-tops,
that my blood may be cooled
by the wind.

F. S. FLINT

II

I know this room,
and there are corridors:
the pictures, I have seen before;
the statues and those gems in cases
I have wandered by before,—
stood there silent and lonely
in a dream of years ago.

I know the dark of night is all around me;
my eyes are closed, and I am half asleep.
My wife breathes gently at my side.

But once again this old dream is within me,
and I am on the threshold waiting,
wondering, pleased, and fearful.
Where do those doors lead,
what rooms lie beyond them?
I venture. . . .

But my baby moves and tosses
from side to side,
and her need calls me to her.

Now I stand awake, unseeing,
in the dark,
and I move towards her cot. . . .
I shall not reach her . . . There is no direction. . . .

I shall walk on. . . .

F. S. FLINT

III

Immortal? . . . No,
they cannot be, these people,
nor I.

Tired faces,
eyes that have never seen the world,
bodies that have never lived in air,
lips that have never minted speech,
they are the clipped and garbled,
blocking the highway.
They swarm and eddy
between the banks of glowing shops
towards the red meat,
the potherbs,
the cheapjacks,
or surge in
before the swift rush
of the clanging trams,—
pitiful, ugly, mean,
encumbering.

Immortal? . . .
In a wood,
watching the shadow of a bird
leap from frond to frond of bracken,
I am immortal.

But these?

F. S. FLINT

IV

The grass is beneath my head;
and I gaze
at the thronging stars
in the night.

They fall . . . they fall. . . .
I am overwhelmed,
and afraid.

Each leaf of the aspen
is caressed by the wind,
and each is crying.

And the perfume
of invisible roses
deepens the anguish.

Let a strong mesh of roots
feed the crimson of roses
upon my heart;
and then fold over the hollow
where all the pain was.

F. S. FLINT

V

Under the lily shadow
and the gold
and the blue and mauve
that the whin and the lilac
pour down on the water,
the fishes quiver.

Over the green cold leaves
and the rippled silver
and the tarnished copper
of its neck and beak,
toward the deep black water
beneath the arches,
the swan floats slowly.

Into the dark of the arch the swan floats
and into the black depth of my sorrow
it bears a white rose of flame.

F. S. FLINT

RESTLESSNESS

AT the open door of the room I stand and look at
the night,
Hold my hand to catch the raindrops, that slant into
sight,
Arriving grey from the darkness above suddenly into
the light of the room.
I will escape from the hollow room, the box of light,
And be out in the bewildering darkness, which is
always fecund, which might
Mate my hungry soul with a germ of its womb.

I will go out to the night, as a man goes down to the
shore
To draw his net through the surfs thin line, at the
dawn before
The sun warms the sea, little, lonely and sad, sifting
the sobbing tide.
I will sift the surf that edges the night, with my net,
the four
Strands of my eyes and my lips and my hands and my
feet, sifting the store
Of flotsam until my soul is tired or satisfied.

I will catch in my eyes' quick net
The faces of all the women as they go past,
Bend over them with my soul, to cherish the wet
Cheeks and wet hair a moment, saying: "Is it
you?"
Looking earnestly under the dark umbrellas, held
fast
Against the wind; and if, where the lamplight
blew
Its rainy swill about us, she answered me
With a laugh and a merry wildness that it was she
Who was seeking me, and had found me at last to
free
Me now from the stunting bonds of my chastity,
How glad I should be!

Moving along in the mysterious ebb of the night
Pass the men whose eyes are shut like anemones in a
dark pool;
Why don't they open with vision and speak to me,
what have they in sight?
Why do I wander aimless among them, desirous
fool?

I can always linger over the huddled books on the
stalls,
Always gladden my amorous fingers with the touch

of their leaves,
Always kneel in courtship to the shelves in the
doorways, where falls
The shadow, always offer myself to one mistress,
who always receives.

But oh, it is not enough, it is all no good.
There is something I want to feel in my running
blood,
Something I want to touch; I must hold my face to
the rain,
I must hold my face to the wind, and let it explain
Me its life as it hurries in secret.
I will trail my hands again through the drenched,
cold leaves
Till my hands are full of the chillness and touch of
leaves,
Till at length they induce me to sleep, and to forget.

From: The Project Gutenberg eBook, Amores, by D. H. Lawrence

The Ghost

I went back to the clanging city,
I went back where my old loves stayed,
But my heart was full of my new love's glory,
My eyes were laughing and unafraid.

I met one who had loved me madly
And told his love for all to hear--
But we talked of a thousand things together,
The past was buried too deep to fear.

I met the other, whose love was given
With never a kiss and scarcely a word--
Oh, it was then the terror took me
Of words unuttered that breathed and stirred.

Oh, love that lives its life with laughter
Or love that lives its life with tears
Can die--but love that is never spoken
Goes like a ghost through the winding years. . . .

I went back to the clanging city,
I went back where my old loves stayed,
My heart was full of my new love's glory,--
But my eyes were suddenly afraid.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Love Songs, by Sara Teasdale

Ariettes Oubliées

Il pleut doucement sur la ville.--ARTHUR RIMBAUD

It weeps in my heart
As it rains on the town.
What is this dull smart
Possessing my heart?

Soft sound of the rain
On the ground and the roofs!
To a heart in pain,
O the song of the rain!

It weeps without cause
In my heart-sick heart.
In her faith, what? no flaws?
This grief has no cause.

'Tis sure the worst woe
To know not wherefore
My heart suffers so
Without joy or woe.

Son joyeux, importun, d'un clavecin sonore.--PÉTRUS BOREL

The keyboard, over which two slim hands float,
Shines vaguely in the twilight pink and gray,
Whilst with a sound like wings, note after note
Takes flight to form a pensive little lay
That strays, discreet and charming, faint, remote,
About the room where perfumes of Her stray.

What is this sudden quiet cradling me
To that dim ditty's dreamy rise and fall?
What do you want with me, pale melody?
What is it that you want, ghost musical
That fade toward the window waveringly
A little open on the garden small?

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of Poems of Paul Verlaine, Translated by Gertrude Hall

ARCADY IN ENGLAND

I met some children in a wood,
A happy and tumultuous rout
That came with many a wanton shout
And darted hither and about
(As in a stream the fickle trout),
To ease their pagan lustihood.

And in their midst they led along
A goat with wreaths about his neck
That they had taken pains to deck
To join the bacchanalian throng.

And one of them was garlanded
With strands of wild convolvulus
About his ringlets riotous,
And carried rowan-berries red.

And one, the eldest of the band,
Whose life was seven summers glad,
Was all in flowered muslin clad,
And naked dancing feet she had
To lead the sylvan saraband.
With hazel skin and coral bead
A gipsy dryad of the mead
She seemed; she led the gay stampede
With fruited branches in her hand.

For all were bearing autumn fruit;
Some, apples on the loaded bough,
And pears that on the orchard's brow
With damask-plums are hanging now;
And much they had of woodland loot,
Of berries black and berries blue,
Of fircones, and of medlars too;
And one, who bore no plunder, blew
On reeds like an Arcadian flute.

They passed, and still I stood knee-deep
In thymy grass to watch their train.
They wound along the wooded lane
And crossed a streamlet with a leap,
And as I saw them once again
They passed a shepherd and his sheep.

And you might think, I made this song
For joy of song as I strode along
One day between the Kentish shaws,
Slashing at scarlet hips and haws.
But thinking so, you nothing know
Of children taken unawares,

Of tinkers' tents among the gorse,
The poor lean goat, the hobbled horse,
And painted vans for country fairs.

From: The Project Gutenberg EBook of Orchard and Vineyard, by Victoria Mary (Vita) Sackville-West

AD DOMINAM SUAM MARIAM VIRGINEM

O lily Lady of loveliness,
O tender-hearted, marvellous-eyed,
Bend from Thine aureate throne and bless
The lonely people and comfortless
At Jesu-Mass and Vespertide.

And bless the mighty and proud of mien,
The scornful folk that pity and pass,--
For they are lonely as none have been,
The proud that lack on whom to lean--
At Vespertide and Jesu-Mass.

And bless before Thou makest end
Both me and mine in sorrow and pride,
Where frankincense and prayer ascend
And kneeling lilies whisper and bend
At Jesu-Mass and Vespertide.

DESIDERIO DESIDERAVI

Dear Father God, I want but one thing now.
Because I have been heart-proud all my days,
And given and asked all proudly for Love's sake,
In search of some lost tenderness out of the world,
And somehow never found it, I want this.
I want to choose my death as I have chosen
Mine other lovers proudly, and cleave to him.
I do not want to die afraid and failing
Some king that trusted me; nor yet to leave
This beautiful bright-coloured world in anguish,
Dirt, ugliness, old age, or shamefully
Eaten up with lust. I want to make myself
Lovelier on that last day than any of these
My lovers yet have found me, and so to die
Calmly by mine own hand and follow after
That tenderness that somehow passed me by,
That tenderness that will not let me be.

HUMILITY

Take counsel, O my friend, of your heart's pride,
And choose the proud thing alway. Never heed
The "wretched, rash, intruding fools" of the world,
Nor take the half-truths that life brings old men
For wisdom: nor the naked indecencies
That purity-mongers have shamed children with
For goodness: nor the silly hypocrisies
Of mean men for humility. But say,
"God is my Father. Christ was young and died
To comfort me. The towering archangels
With all their blue and gold and steely mail
Are my strong helpers and mine elder brothers.
The sweet white virgins gone to martyrdom
Calm-eyed and singing are my sisters." Yea,
Because of all these things keep your heart proud.
Be proud enough to serve the poor, too proud
To attend the rich: enough to love, not hate,
And give, not sell. Remember gentleness
Is the heart's pride of understanding, truth
Her greatness that will not be afraid for wrath
Nor flatter favour. This remember also,
The pure in heart shall walk like fierce white flames
Questing across the world in goodlier hope
And knightlier courtesy than they of the Graal,
For these are they in the end that shall see God.

GERALD H. CROW

(_HERTFORD_)

From: The Project Gutenberg EBook of Oxford Poetry 1917, by Various

DEJECTION: AN ODE

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence.

I

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing drafty that moans and rakes
Upon the strings of this Æolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The, coming-on of rain and squally blast.
And oh that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move
and live!

II

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear--

O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,

All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze--and with how blank an eye
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,

That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen
Yon crescent Moon, as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

III

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud--
Enveloping the Earth--
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,

Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud--
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud--
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth
But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man--
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that rav'st without,
Bare crag, or mountain-tairn, or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,

Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark-brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of an host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds--
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings--all is over--
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

1802.

From: Project Gutenberg's Poems of Coleridge, by Coleridge

On the Shores of Tennessee

"Move my arm-chair, faithful Pompey,
In the sunshine bright and strong,
For this world is fading, Pompey--
Massa won't be with you long;
And I fain would hear the south wind
Bring once more the sound to me,
Of the wavelets softly breaking
On the shores of Tennessee.

"Mournful though the ripples murmur
As they still the story tell,
How no vessels float the banner
That I've loved so long and well,
I shall listen to their music,
Dreaming that again I see
Stars and Stripes on sloop and shallop
Sailing up the Tennessee;

"And Pompey, while old Massa's waiting
For Death's last dispatch to come,
If that exiled starry banner
Should come proudly sailing home,
You shall greet it, slave no longer--
Voice and hand shall both be free
That shout and point to Union colors
On the waves of Tennessee."

"Massa's berry kind to Pompey;
But old darkey's happy here,
Where he's tended corn and cotton
For dese many a long-gone year.
Ober yonder, Missis' sleeping--
No one tends her grave like me;
Mebbe she would miss the flowers
She used to love in Tennessee.

"Pears like, she was watching Massa--
If Pompey should beside him stay,
Mebbe she'd remember better
How for him she used to pray;
Telling him that way up yonder
White as snow his soul would be,
If he served the Lord of Heaven
While he lived in Tennessee."

Silently the tears were rolling
Down the poor old dusky face,
As he stepped behind his master,
In his long-accustomed place.

Then a silence fell around them,
As they gazed on rock and tree
Pictured in the placid waters
Of the rolling Tennessee;--

Master, dreaming of the battle
Where he fought by Marion's side,
Where he bid the haughty Tarleton
Stoop his lordly crest of pride:--
Man, remembering how yon sleeper
Once he held upon his knee.
Ere she loved the gallant soldier,
Ralph Vervair of Tennessee.

Still the south wind fondly lingers
'Mid the veteran's silver hair;
Still the bondman, close beside him
Stands behind the old arm-chair.
With his dark-hued hand uplifted,
Shading eyes, he bends to see
Where the woodland, boldly jutting,
Turns aside the Tennessee.

Thus he watches cloud-born shadows
Glide from tree to mountain-crest,
Softly creeping, aye and ever
To the river's yielding breast.
Ha! above the foliage yonder
Something flutters wild and free!
"Massa! Massa! Hallelujah!
The flag's come back to Tennessee!"

"Pompey, hold me on your shoulder,
Help me stand on foot once more,
That I may salute the colors
As they pass my cabin door.
Here's the paper signed that frees you,
Give a freeman's shout with me--
'God and Union!' be our watchword
Evermore in Tennessee!"

Then the trembling voice grew fainter,
And the limbs refused to stand;
One prayer to Jesus--and the soldier
Glided to the better land.
When the flag went down the river
Man and master both were free;
While the ring-dove's note was mingled
With the rippling Tennessee.

____Ethel Lynn Beers.____

The Ride of Jennie M'Neal

Paul Revere was a rider bold--
Well has his valorous deed been told;
Sheridan's ride was a glorious one--
Often it has been dwelt upon;
But why should men do all the deeds
On which the love of a patriot feeds?
Hearken to me, while I reveal
The dashing ride of Jennie M'Neal.

On a spot as pretty as might be found
In the dangerous length of the Neutral Ground,
In a cottage, cozy, and all their own,
She and her mother lived alone.
Safe were the two, with their frugal store,
From all of the many who passed their door;
For Jennie's mother was strange to fears,
And Jennie was large for fifteen years;
With vim her eyes were glistening,
Her hair was the hue of a blackbird's wing;
And while the friends who knew her well
The sweetness of her heart could tell,
A gun that hung on the kitchen wall
Looked solemnly quick to heed her call;
And they who were evil-minded knew
Her nerve was strong and her aim was true.
So all kind words and acts did deal
To generous, black-eyed Jennie M'Neal.

One night, when the sun had crept to bed,
And rain-clouds lingered overhead,
And sent their surly drops for proof
To drum a tune on the cottage roof,
Close after a knock at the outer door
There entered a dozen dragoons or more.
Their red coats, stained by the muddy road,
That they were British soldiers showed;
The captain his hostess bent to greet,
Saying, "Madam, please give us a bit to eat;
We will pay you well, and, if may be,
This bright-eyed girl for pouring our tea;
Then we must dash ten miles ahead,
To catch a rebel colonel abed.
He is visiting home, as doth appear;
We will make his pleasure cost him dear."
And they fell on the hasty supper with zeal,
Close-watched the while by Jennie M'Neal.

For the gray-haired colonel they hovered near
Had been her true friend, kind and dear;
And oft, in her younger days, had he
Right proudly perched her upon his knee,
And told her stories many a one
Concerning the French war lately done.
And oft together the two friends were,
And many the arts he had taught to her;
She had hunted by his fatherly side,
He had shown her how to fence and ride;
And once had said, "The time may be,
Your skill and courage may stand by me."
So sorrow for him she could but feel,
Brave, grateful-hearted Jennie M'Neal.

With never a thought or a moment more,
Bare-headed she slipped from the cottage door,
Ran out where the horses were left to feed,
Unhitched and mounted the captain's steed,
And down the hilly and rock-strewn way
She urged the fiery horse of gray.
Around her slender and cloakless form
Pattered and moaned the ceaseless storm;
Secure and tight a gloveless hand
Grasped the reins with stern command;
And full and black her long hair streamed,
Whenever the ragged lightning gleamed.
And on she rushed for the colonel's weal,
Brave, lioness-hearted Jennie M'Neal.

Hark! from the hills, a moment mute,
Came a clatter of hoofs in hot pursuit;
And a cry from the foremost trooper said,
"Halt! or your blood be on your head";
She heeded it not, and not in vain
She lashed the horse with the bridle-rein.

So into the night the gray horse strode;
His shoes hewed fire from the rocky road;
And the high-born courage that never dies
Flashed from his rider's coal-black eyes.
The pebbles flew from the fearful race:
The raindrops grasped at her glowing face.
"On, on, brave beast!" with loud appeal,
Cried eager, resolute Jennie M'Neal.

"Halt!" once more came the voice of dread;
"Halt! or your blood be on your head!"
Then, no one answering to the calls,
Sped after her a volley of balls.
They passed her in her rapid flight,
They screamed to her left, they screamed to her right;

But, rushing still o'er the slippery track,
She sent no token of answer back,
Except a silvery laughter-peal,
Brave, merry-hearted Jennie M'Neal.

So on she rushed, at her own good will,
Through wood and valley, o'er plain and hill;
The gray horse did his duty well,
Till all at once he stumbled and fell,
Himself escaping the nets of harm,
But flinging the girl with a broken arm.
Still undismayed by the numbing pain,
She clung to the horse's bridle-rein
And gently bidding him to stand,
Petted him with her able hand;
Then sprung again to the saddle bow,
And shouted, "One more trial now!"
As if ashamed of the heedless fall,
He gathered his strength once more for all,
And, galloping down a hillside steep,
Gained on the troopers at every leap;
No more the high-bred steed did reel,
But ran his best for Jennie M'Neal.

They were a furlong behind, or more,
When the girl burst through the colonel's door,
Her poor arm helpless hanging with pain,
And she all drabbled and drenched with rain,
But her cheeks as red as fire-brands are,
And her eyes as bright as a blazing star,
And shouted, "Quick! be quick, I say!
They come! they come! Away! away!"
Then, sunk on the rude white floor of deal,
Poor, brave, exhausted Jennie M'Neal.

The startled colonel sprung, and pressed
The wife and children to his breast,
And turned away from his fireside bright,
And glided into the stormy night;
Then soon and safely made his way
To where the patriot army lay.
But first he bent in the dim firelight,
And kissed the forehead broad and white,
And blessed the girl who had ridden so well
To keep him out of a prison-cell.
The girl roused up at the martial din,
Just as the troopers came rushing in,
And laughed, e'en in the midst of a moan,
Saying, "Good sirs, your bird has flown.
'Tis I who have scared him from his nest;
So deal with me now as you think best."
But the grand young captain bowed, and said,

"Never you hold a moment's dread.
Of womankind I must crown you queen;
So brave a girl I have never seen.
Wear this gold ring as your valor's due;
And when peace comes I will come for you."
But Jennie's face an arch smile wore,
As she said, "There's a lad in Putnam's corps,
Who told me the same, long time ago;
You two would never agree, I know.
I promised my love to be as true as steel,"
Said good, sure-hearted Jennie M'Neal.

Will Carleton.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Poems Teachers Ask For, by Various

ON THE DEATH OF A METAPHYSICIAN

Unhappy dreamer, who outwinged in flight
The pleasant region of the things I love,
And soared beyond the sunshine, and above
The golden cornfields and the dear and bright
Warmth of the hearth,--blasphemer of delight,
Was your proud bosom not at peace with Jove,
That you sought, thankless for his guarded grove,
The empty horror of abysmal night?
Ah, the thin air is cold above the moon!
I stood and saw you fall, befooled in death,
As, in your numbed spirit's fatal swoon,
You cried you were a god, or were to be;
I heard with feeble moan your boastful breath
Bubble from depths of the Icarian sea.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Poems, by George Santayana

Our Old Feuillage

Always our old feuillage!
Always Florida's green peninsula--always the priceless delta of
Louisiana--always the cotton-fields of Alabama and Texas,
Always California's golden hills and hollows, and the silver
mountains of New Mexico--always soft-breath'd Cuba,
Always the vast slope drain'd by the Southern sea, inseparable with
the slopes drain'd by the Eastern and Western seas,
The area the eighty-third year of these States, the three and a half
millions of square miles,
The eighteen thousand miles of sea-coast and bay-coast on the main,
the thirty thousand miles of river navigation,
The seven millions of distinct families and the same number of dwellings--
always these, and more, branching forth into numberless branches,
Always the free range and diversity--always the continent of Democracy;
Always the prairies, pastures, forests, vast cities, travelers,
Kanada, the snows;
Always these compact lands tied at the hips with the belt stringing
the huge oval lakes;
Always the West with strong native persons, the increasing density there,
the habitants, friendly, threatening, ironical, scorning invaders;
All sights, South, North, East--all deeds, promiscuously done at all times,
All characters, movements, growths, a few noticed, myriads unnoticed,
Through Mannahatta's streets I walking, these things gathering,
On interior rivers by night in the glare of pine knots, steamboats
wooding up,
Sunlight by day on the valley of the Susquehanna, and on the valleys
of the Potomac and Rappahannock, and the valleys of the Roanoke
and Delaware,
In their northerly wilds beasts of prey haunting the Adirondacks the
hills, or lapping the Saginaw waters to drink,
In a lonesome inlet a sheldrake lost from the flock, sitting on the
water rocking silently,
In farmers' barns oxen in the stable, their harvest labor done, they
rest standing, they are too tired,
Afar on arctic ice the she-walrus lying drowsily while her cubs play around,
The hawk sailing where men have not yet sail'd, the farthest polar
sea, ripply, crystalline, open, beyond the floes,
White drift spooning ahead where the ship in the tempest dashes,
On solid land what is done in cities as the bells strike midnight together,
In primitive woods the sounds there also sounding, the howl of the
wolf, the scream of the panther, and the hoarse bellow of the elk,
In winter beneath the hard blue ice of Moosehead lake, in summer
visible through the clear waters, the great trout swimming,
In lower latitudes in warmer air in the Carolinas the large black
buzzard floating slowly high beyond the tree tops,
Below, the red cedar festoon'd with tylandria, the pines and
cypresses growing out of the white sand that spreads far and flat,
Rude boats descending the big Pedee, climbing plants, parasites with
color'd flowers and berries enveloping huge trees,

The waving drapery on the live-oak trailing long and low,
noiselessly waved by the wind,
The camp of Georgia wagoners just after dark, the supper-fires and
the cooking and eating by whites and negroes,
Thirty or forty great wagons, the mules, cattle, horses, feeding
from troughs,
The shadows, gleams, up under the leaves of the old sycamore-trees,
the flames with the black smoke from the pitch-pine curling and rising;
Southern fishermen fishing, the sounds and inlets of North
Carolina's coast, the shad-fishery and the herring-fishery, the
large sweep-seines, the windlasses on shore work'd by horses, the
clearing, curing, and packing-houses;
Deep in the forest in piney woods turpentine dropping from the
incisions in the trees, there are the turpentine works,
There are the negroes at work in good health, the ground in all
directions is cover'd with pine straw;
In Tennessee and Kentucky slaves busy in the coalings, at the forge,
by the furnace-blaze, or at the corn-shucking,
In Virginia, the planter's son returning after a long absence,
joyfully welcom'd and kiss'd by the aged mulatto nurse,
On rivers boatmen safely moor'd at nightfall in their boats under
shelter of high banks,
Some of the younger men dance to the sound of the banjo or fiddle,
others sit on the gunwale smoking and talking;
Late in the afternoon the mocking-bird, the American mimic, singing
in the Great Dismal Swamp,
There are the greenish waters, the resinous odor, the plenteous
moss, the cypress-tree, and the juniper-tree;
Northward, young men of Mannahatta, the target company from an
excursion returning home at evening, the musket-muzzles all
bear bunches of flowers presented by women;
Children at play, or on his father's lap a young boy fallen asleep,
(how his lips move! how he smiles in his sleep!)
The scout riding on horseback over the plains west of the
Mississippi, he ascends a knoll and sweeps his eyes around;
California life, the miner, bearded, dress'd in his rude costume,
the stanch California friendship, the sweet air, the graves one
in passing meets solitary just aside the horse-path;
Down in Texas the cotton-field, the negro-cabins, drivers driving
mules or oxen before rude carts, cotton bales piled on banks
and wharves;
Encircling all, vast-darting up and wide, the American Soul, with
equal hemispheres, one Love, one Dilation or Pride;
In arriere the peace-talk with the Iroquois the aborigines, the
calumet, the pipe of good-will, arbitration, and indorsement,
The sachem blowing the smoke first toward the sun and then toward
the earth,
The drama of the scalp-dance enacted with painted faces and guttural
exclamations,
The setting out of the war-party, the long and stealthy march,
The single file, the swinging hatchets, the surprise and slaughter
of enemies;

All the acts, scenes, ways, persons, attitudes of these States,
 reminiscences, institutions,
All these States compact, every square mile of these States without
 excepting a particle;
Me pleas'd, rambling in lanes and country fields, Paumanok's fields,
Observing the spiral flight of two little yellow butterflies
 shuffling between each other, ascending high in the air,
The darting swallow, the destroyer of insects, the fall traveler
 southward but returning northward early in the spring,
The country boy at the close of the day driving the herd of cows and
 shouting to them as they loiter to browse by the roadside,
The city wharf, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, New
 Orleans, San Francisco,
The departing ships when the sailors heave at the capstan;
Evening--me in my room--the setting sun,
The setting summer sun shining in my open window, showing the
 swarm of flies, suspended, balancing in the air in the centre
 of the room, darting athwart, up and down, casting swift
 shadows in specks on the opposite wall where the shine is;
The athletic American matron speaking in public to crowds of listeners,
Males, females, immigrants, combinations, the copiousness, the
 individuality of the States, each for itself--the moneymakers,
Factories, machinery, the mechanical forces, the windlass, lever,
 pulley, all certainties,
The certainty of space, increase, freedom, futurity,
In space the sporades, the scatter'd islands, the stars--on the firm
 earth, the lands, my lands,
O lands! all so dear to me--what you are, (whatever it is,) I putting it
 at random in these songs, become a part of that, whatever it is,
Southward there, I screaming, with wings slow flapping, with the
 myriads of gulls wintering along the coasts of Florida,
Otherways there atwixt the banks of the Arkansaw, the Rio Grande,
 the Nueces, the Brazos, the Tombigbee, the Red River, the
 Saskatchewan or the Osage, I with the spring waters laughing
 and skipping and running,
Northward, on the sands, on some shallow bay of Paumanok, I with
 parties of snowy herons wading in the wet to seek worms and
 aquatic plants,
Retreating, triumphantly twittering, the king-bird, from piercing
 the crow with its bill, for amusement--and I triumphantly twittering,
The migrating flock of wild geese alighting in autumn to refresh
 themselves, the body of the flock feed, the sentinels outside
 move around with erect heads watching, and are from time to time
 reliev'd by other sentinels--and I feeding and taking turns
 with the rest,
In Kanadian forests the moose, large as an ox, corner'd by hunters,
 rising desperately on his hind-feet, and plunging with his
 fore-feet, the hoofs as sharp as knives--and I, plunging at the
 hunters, corner'd and desperate,
In the Mannahatta, streets, piers, shipping, store-houses, and the
 countless workmen working in the shops,
And I too of the Mannahatta, singing thereof--and no less in myself

than the whole of the Mannahatta in itself,
Singing the song of These, my ever-united lands--my body no more
inevitably united, part to part, and made out of a thousand
diverse contributions one identity, any more than my lands
are inevitably united and made ONE IDENTITY;
Nativities, climates, the grass of the great pastoral Plains,
Cities, labors, death, animals, products, war, good and evil--these me,
These affording, in all their particulars, the old feuillage to me
and to America, how can I do less than pass the clew of the union
of them, to afford the like to you?
Whoever you are! how can I but offer you divine leaves, that you
also be eligible as I am?
How can I but as here chanting, invite you for yourself to collect
bouquets of the incomparable feuillage of these States?

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of Leaves of Grass, by Walt Whitman

SONNETS: 1913-1914

I

I saw you smiling over broken flowers,
Yourself a flower unbroken and more rare
Than petals that make sweet the moonlit air,
And load with scent the Summer's golden hours.
Your perfect head, the ripple of your hair,
Like the soft sun that shines through April showers,
Leans from a fairyland of twinkling towers,
And beckons me to an enchanted stair.

Your eyes, your eyes, divide me from my sleep;
The echo of your laughter makes me weep,
You fill the measureless world, you frailest thing!
And in the silence of my deepest dream,
Your beauty wanders like a whispering stream,
And brushes past me like an angel's wing.

II

To-night the thoughts of you drift round my bed
Like thistledown; I weave them into rhymes;
And as I fall to sleep I hear their chimes
Building sweet music high above my head,
And prayers and poems all in praise of you;
And, happy in my fading dream, I say:
"There will be something ready with the day
To send to her, to speak for me, to sue."

But when the morning comes, the nimble words
Have fled into the air like frightened birds,
That answer my soft whistle with a scream;
And only the recalcitrant thoughts remain;
The baffled blind desire to find again
The accents that were docile in my dream.

III

I think God made your soul for better things
Than idly laughing with the noisy crew.
I think He meant the spirit that is you
To soar above the world with silver wings;
To hear the music of celestial strings;
To keep the flame within you always true
Unto your own high pole; and pure as dew
The fountain that within you sometimes sings.

I think you are an exile in the noise
Of busy markets; alien to the toys
That dazzle others, firing them with greed;
And, like a seagull, lost upon the land,
You long for the large breakers and the sand,
The strong salt air, the surf, the drifting weed.

IV

The world was waiting for the thunder's birth,
To-day, and cloud was piled on sullen cloud:
Then strong, and straight, and clean, and cool, and loud
The rain came down, and drenched the stifling earth.
The heavy clouds have lifted and rolled by;
The riotous wet leaves with music ring,
And now the nightingale begins to sing,
And tender as a rose-leaf is the sky.

I wonder if some day this stifling care
That weighs upon my heart will fall in showers?
I wonder if the hot and heavy hours
Will roll away and leave such limpid air,
And if my soul will riot in the rain,
And sing as gladly as that bird again?

V

I picked this cornflower in the rustling rye,
These briar roses from a luscious hedge,
This purple iris in the woodland sedge.
It was the quaver of the dragon-fly,
Dropped like a piece of azure from the sky,

That led me to that pool amongst the trees--
And there I lay and listened to the bees,
And murmured sadly to myself: "Good-bye."

Good-bye! these perished petals that I send
Will tell you that this truly is the end;
Good-bye to you and to the golden hours.
These briar roses grew beside the stream--
No, no! I shall not send you faded flowers--
I need them for the grave of my lost dream.

Sosnofka, June 1914

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Poems, 1914-1919, by Maurice Baring

THE MALVERN HILLS

THE Malvern Hills be green some days,
And some days purple-blue,
There never was the like of them
The whole of England through.

From Hanley straight into the Wells
The road runs long and white,
And there the hills they meet your gaze
Against the evening light.

Against the evening light they stand,
So proud, and dark, and old,
The Raggedstone and Hollybush,
And Worcester Beacon bold.

No matter where you chance to be,
However far away,
You'll see the hills awaiting you
At close of every day.

Oh! it's a lovely sight to see
The twilight stealing down
Their steepish banks and little paths,
Along to Malvern town.

And maybe on the Severn side,
Hung low on Bredon's mound,
The big red harvest moon will rise,
So lazy-like and round.

They talks a lot o' foreign parts,
Them as has seen them do,
But give me Malvern Hills at dusk
All green or purple-blue!

Clover.

Inscribed to the Memory of John Keats.

Dear uplands, Chester's favorable fields,
My large unjealous Loves, many yet one --
A grave good-morrow to your Graces, all,
Fair tilth and fruitful seasons!

Lo, how still!

The midmorn empties you of men, save me;
Speak to your lover, meadows! None can hear.
I lie as lies yon placid Brandywine,
Holding the hills and heavens in my heart
For contemplation.

'Tis a perfect hour.

From founts of dawn the fluent autumn day
Has rippled as a brook right pleasantly
Half-way to noon; but now with widening turn
Makes pause, in lucent meditation locked,
And rounds into a silver pool of morn,
Bottom'd with clover-fields. My heart just hears
Eight lingering strokes of some far village-bell,
That speak the hour so inward-voiced, meseems
Time's conscience has but whispered him eight hints
Of revolution. Reigns that mild surcease
That stills the middle of each rural morn --
When nimble noises that with sunrise ran
About the farms have sunk again to rest;
When Tom no more across the horse-lot calls
To sleepy Dick, nor Dick husk-voiced upbraids
The sway-back'd roan for stamping on his foot
With sulphurous oath and kick in flank, what time
The cart-chain clinks across the slanting shaft,
And, kitchenward, the rattling bucket plumps
Souse down the well, where quivering ducks quack loud,
And Susan Cook is singing.

Up the sky

The hesitating moon slow trembles on,
Faint as a new-washed soul but lately up
From out a buried body. Far about,
A hundred slopes in hundred fantasies
Most ravishingly run, so smooth of curve
That I but seem to see the fluent plain
Rise toward a rain of clover-blooms, as lakes
Pout gentle mounds of plashment up to meet
Big shower-drops. Now the little winds, as bees,
Bowing the blooms come wandering where I lie
Mixt soul and body with the clover-tufts,
Light on my spirit, give from wing and thigh

Rich pollens and divine sweet irritants
To every nerve, and freshly make report
Of inmost Nature's secret autumn-thought
Unto some soul of sense within my frame
That owns each cognizance of the outlying five,
And sees, hears, tastes, smells, touches, all in one.

Tell me, dear Clover (since my soul is thine,
Since I am fain give study all the day,
To make thy ways my ways, thy service mine,
To seek me out thy God, my God to be,
And die from out myself to live in thee) --
Now, Cousin Clover, tell me in mine ear:
Go'st thou to market with thy pink and green?
Of what avail, this color and this grace?
Wert thou but squat of stem and brindle-brown,
Still careless herds would feed. A poet, thou:
What worth, what worth, the whole of all thine art?
Three-Leaves, instruct me! I am sick of price.
Framed in the arching of two clover-stems
Where-through I gaze from off my hill, afar,
The spacious fields from me to Heaven take on
Tremors of change and new significance
To th' eye, as to the ear a simple tale
Begins to hint a parable's sense beneath.
The prospect widens, cuts all bounds of blue
Where horizontal limits bend, and spreads
Into a curious-hill'd and curious-valley'd Vast,
Endless before, behind, around; which seems
Th' incalculable Up-and-Down of Time
Made plain before mine eyes. The clover-stems
Still cover all the space; but now they bear,
For clover-blooms, fair, stately heads of men
With poets' faces heartsome, dear and pale --
Sweet visages of all the souls of time
Whose loving service to the world has been
In the artist's way expressed and bodied. Oh,
In arms' reach, here be Dante, Keats, Chopin,
Raphael, Lucretius, Omar, Angelo,
Beethoven, Chaucer, Schubert, Shakespeare, Bach,
And Buddha (sweetest masters! Let me lay
These arms this once, this humble once, about
Your reverend necks -- the most containing clasp,
For all in all, this world e'er saw!) and there,
Yet further on, bright throngs unnamable
Of workers worshipful, nobilities
In the Court of Gentle Service, silent men,
Dwellers in woods, brooders on helpful art,
And all the press of them, the fair, the large,
That wrought with beauty.
Lo, what bulk is here?
Now comes the Course-of-things, shaped like an Ox,

Slow browsing, o'er my hillside, ponderously --
The huge-browed, tame, and workful Course-of-things,
That hath his grass, if earth be round or flat,
And hath his grass, if empires plunge in pain
Or faiths flash out. This cool, unasking Ox
Comes browsing o'er my hills and vales of Time,
And thrusts me out his tongue, and curls it, sharp,
And sicklewise, about my poets' heads,
And twists them in, all -- Dante, Keats, Chopin,
Raphael, Lucretius, Omar, Angelo,
Beethoven, Chaucer, Schubert, Shakespeare, Bach,
And Buddha, in one sheaf -- and champs and chews,
With slantly-churning jaws, and swallows down;
Then slowly plants a mighty forefoot out,
And makes advance to futureward, one inch.
So: they have played their part.

And to this end?

This, God? This, troublous-breeding Earth? This, Sun
Of hot, quick pains? To this no-end that ends,
These Masters wrought, and wept, and sweated blood,
And burned, and loved, and ached with public shame,
And found no friends to breathe their loves to, save
Woods and wet pillows? This was all? This Ox?
"Nay," quoth a sum of voices in mine ear,
"God's clover, we, and feed His Course-of-things;
The pasture is God's pasture; systems strange
Of food and fiberment He hath, whereby
The general brawn is built for plans of His
To quality precise. Kinsman, learn this:
The artist's market is the heart of man;
The artist's price, some little good of man.
Tease not thy vision with vain search for ends.
The End of Means is art that works by love.
The End of Ends . . . in God's Beginning's lost."

West Chester, Pa., Summer of 1876.

The Project Gutenberg Etext of The Poems of Sidney Lanier

Absence

My cup is empty to-night,
Cold and dry are its sides,
Chilled by the wind from the open window.
Empty and void, it sparkles white in the moonlight.
The room is filled with the strange scent
Of wistaria blossoms.
They sway in the moon's radiance
And tap against the wall.
But the cup of my heart is still,
And cold, and empty.

When you come, it brims
Red and trembling with blood,
Heart's blood for your drinking;
To fill your mouth with love
And the bitter-sweet taste of a soul.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Sword Blades and Poppy Seed, by Amy Lowell